

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### UNI-CAPITOL WASHINGTON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

#### HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, for decades the United States has worked closely with Australia on issues of great importance to our two nations. Australia has stood out among the international community as a friend of the United States and remains one of our closest cultural, economic and security partners. It is in this spirit that a program was launched 10 years ago to further foster those close ties. Since that time, the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program has delivered to the United States approximately 100 of Australia's best and brightest to serve as interns in a variety of Federal agencies and congressional offices.

During my first term in Congress, I was privileged to welcome Anthony "A.J." Bremmer to my office. Anthony was a welcome addition to my congressional staff and he quickly became an integral part of the team. When the opportunity arose again this winter to participate in the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program, I immediately agreed to welcome another Australian "ambassador." Jehane Sharah, much like A.J., has quickly become a valued part of our staff. Jehane has demonstrated a maturity and a curiosity beyond her college years. Prior to coming to the United States, Jehane worked for two members of the Australian parliament. This experience has helped her flourish during her short time in Washington. She has attended briefings, assisted constituents, and worked with my staff on a variety of research initiatives. Jehane also has an extensive background in communications, serving as a senior reporter for a newspaper in Canberra. As a result, she has assisted my communications director on a number of important projects. Jehane truly is an exceptional ambassador for the people of Australia.

Many of my colleagues have also been privileged to welcome students like Jehane to their offices. This year, 12 students from all across Australia are serving in offices here in Washington. They were drawn from seven Australian universities in four different states and the Australian Capital Territory. From my experience, it is clear that this program will help foster a new generation of understanding and shared experiences between our two countries. One example of this can be seen in a recent feature piece written by Jehane for the Sunday Canberra Times. The article details her experience at the inauguration of President Obama, an event that united not only the people of our country, but those around the world as well.

We in the United States and Australia owe a debt of gratitude to the program's founder,

Eric Federer. Eric is a former senior House and Senate Congressional staffer who has worked tirelessly to bring students from Australia to the halls of Washington through his efforts at the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program. Madam Speaker, as Members of Congress we have a responsibility to our constituents back home and an opportunity to reach out to people across the globe. It is with that in mind that I would encourage all of my colleagues to open their doors to students from around the world so that they can share in our great democracy. Similarly, I would encourage American university students to travel abroad to learn about other cultures and governments and share their knowledge of our country. I ask my colleagues to join with me in recognizing the contributions of the Uni-Capitol Internship Program and to once more thank Jehane Sharah for her dedication and hard work.

### HONORING DIANE GLASSER AND PAMELA BUSHNELL

#### HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Diane Glasser and Pamela Bushnell, both of whom were sworn in on November 10, 2008 as new commissioners of the city of Tamarac, Florida. As outstanding public servants and great friends of mine, I wish to recognize their accomplishments and congratulate them on their election as commissioners.

Diane Glasser, who was elected as commissioner of District 3, has been a leader in our community for many years. A resident of Kings Point in Tamarac, Diane has been a member of many important committees and task forces, including the Senior Citizens Involvement Task Force for the Broward County School Board, the Charter Board of Tamarac, the Tamarac Redistricting Committee, and the Broward County Human Rights Board. She was chairwoman of Tamarac's 25th anniversary celebration and has served as a four-time delegate to the Democratic National Convention, has been chosen a Democratic National Committeewoman since 1992, and has been First Vice Chair of the Florida Democratic Party since 2001. Her commitment to service and to the issues that matter to our constituency makes her a wonderful choice for commissioner, and I look forward to working with her in the years to come.

Pamela Bushnell, recently elected as commissioner of District 1, has also been a member of many local boards and is an active leader in our community. A resident and current president of Mainlands 1 & 2, Pamela has served on the boards of the City of Margate Committee for the Disabled; the Zoning Board of the town of Sutton, New Hampshire; and

Schenectady County Community College; among many others. A volunteer at Calvary Chapel in Fort Lauderdale and a participant in the Broward Sheriff's Office Citizens Observer Patrol Program, Pamela will make a fine addition to Tamarac's government and will serve her district with the utmost distinction.

I look forward to working with Diane, Pamela, Mayor Beth Talabisco, and the rest of the Commission of the City of Tamarac, and wish Diane and Pamela only the best as they begin their service on the City Commission.

### TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT MICHAEL DUNN

#### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Sergeant Michael Dunn who retired from the Pleasanton Police Department on January 16, 2009 after 25 years of dedicated public service. Michael began his career as a Military Police Officer with the United States Marine Corps, where he served for over eight years. He was a member of the Los Angeles Police Department from 1982 until he was hired by the City of Pleasanton in 1985 and was promoted to the Rank of Sergeant in 1997.

During his career in police service, Michael was recognized on numerous occasions for his tenacity, professionalism and dedication to his work. He was an exemplary police officer and consistently gave more to the community than was asked of him. For example, he was instrumental in introducing a variety of programs to the community, including bicycle rodeos and a minor offense court to provide rehabilitation alternatives for juvenile offenders.

Michael worked a variety of assignments during his career, including Field Training Officer, DARE Officer, SWAT Officer, Traffic Motor Officer, Juvenile Detective, Rangemaster, Patrol Field Supervisor and Traffic Division Supervisor.

During his career, Michael experienced all that law enforcement offers, including capturing kidnapping and homicide suspects within hours of the crime, handling high profile child molestation investigations, assisting in controlling large scale public demonstrations, providing critical assistance during the Oakland Hills Firestorm, and saving the life of a young girl at a local restaurant. Michael always put the community and people first.

He possesses the critical qualities of an exemplary police officer and has been a positive influence to his colleagues in law enforcement. I commend Michael Dunn for his legacy of leadership and attention to detail, while always caring for those with whom he worked as well as the community at large.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. SAM GRAVES**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, due to personal reasons, on Monday, January 26, 2009 I missed rollcall votes 30 and 31. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on those rollcall votes.

Thank you.

HARDROCK MINING AND  
RECLAMATION ACT OF 2009**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 27, 2009*

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, last Friday, January 23, marks the passing of 137 years predecessors in the U.S. House of Representatives began to debate a bill to promote the development of mineral resources in the United States. One described the legislation as "an experiment."

On that day in January 1872, Representative Sargent from the State of California noted prior fierce debate in the House over a core element of the proposed mining law—that the Federal Government would be selling off the mineral rights of the United States rather than holding onto Federal ownership and imposing a royalty on future production. Representative Maynard from the State of Tennessee questioned whether the law might encourage speculation.

During an April 1872 debate in the U.S. Senate, Senator Cole from the State of California cautioned that the proposed mining law would allow a person to acquire large tracts of land "which might be worth thousands of dollars per acre, perhaps millions . . ." Senator Alcorn from the State of Mississippi acknowledged that he had never seen a gold mine in his life, while Senator Casserly, also from the State of California, warned of men who could not imagine the mineral deposits that "lie to a fabulous extent in value between the Mississippi River and the Sierra Nevada."

Ultimately, however, our predecessors believed the bill would "meet with universal favor" and would prevent litigation among mining claimants. They liked the idea that the bill might, as Representative Sargent hoped, "bring large amounts of money into the Treasury of the United States, causing the miners to settle themselves permanently, and improve and establish homes, to go deeper in the earth, to dig further into the Hills . . . and build up their communities and States."

And so, on May 10, 1872, Congress passed a law that encouraged people to go West, locate hardrock minerals and stake mining claims on Federal lands, and remove treasure troves of gold, silver, copper, and platinum from the public domain—for free.

The General Mining Law of 1872, or the "experiment," as some of our predecessors named it, has endured for more than one and a third centuries—a total of 137 years.

Today, we can resoundingly assert that the experiment has lasted long enough.

Consider some of the impacts of the 1872 Mining Law:

According to the Congressional Budget Office, it allows the hardrock mining industry to remove \$1 billion in precious metals every year from America's public lands, with no royalty payment or production fee to the Federal Government. By comparison, the coal, gas, and oil industries pay royalties of 8 percent to 18.75 percent.

According to the Department of the Interior, it has allowed mining claimants to buy American public's lands for \$2.50–\$5 an acre—lands that could easily be worth thousands or tens of thousands of dollars an acre today. Between 1994 and 2006, the U.S. government was forced to sell off more than 27,000 acres of public land holding valuable minerals for a pittance: \$112,000.

Finally, as detailed in several Government Accountability Office reports, there have been instances where American taxpayers have paid a fortune to buy back the very lands we once gave away. From Central Idaho's Thunder Mountain, to Telluride, CO, to land outside Yellowstone National Park, millions of public and private dollars have been spent to reacquire thousands of acres of mining claims to protect public access for hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities.

Given our current economic crisis and the empty state of our national Treasury, it is ludicrous to be allowing this outmoded law to continue to exempt these lucrative mining activities from paying a fair return to the American people.

Beyond that, the 1872 Mining Law has allowed unscrupulous owners of hardrock mines to abandon hundreds of thousands of mines—and to require American taxpayers to foot the bill because there is no "polluter-pays" funding source, that is, a dedicated source of cleanup funding.

In 2007, the U.S. Forest Service estimated that, with its current annual abandoned mine cleanup budget of \$15 million, it would take 370 years to complete its \$5.5 billion in abandoned mine cleanup and safety mitigation work. In 2008, the inspector general of the Department of the Interior concluded that the public's health and safety is jeopardized by the unaddressed hazards posed by abandoned mines on Federal lands, including lands in the national parks. These old mines are not just eyesores, they are killers.

Today, I, along with Representatives MILLER, WAXMAN, MARKEY, BERMAN, GRIJALVA, HOLT, COSTA, CHRISTENSEN, STARK, KILDEE, HINCHEY, ESHOO, BLUMENAUER, KENNEDY, KIND, CAPPS, SCHIFF, HONDA, SALAZAR, TSONGAS, and CONNOLLY, introduce the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2009. This legislation would end the financial and environmental abuses permitted by the 1872 Mining Law—archaic provisions that fly in the face of logic, and are not what taxpayers, sportsmen, conservationists, and western communities want or need.

This is the same bill that the House of Representatives passed by a bipartisan vote of 244–166 in 2007. It contains the same critical requirements, including:

An 8 percent royalty on production from future hardrock mines on public lands, and a 4 percent royalty from current mines.

A permanent end to the sell-off of public lands holding mineral resources.

The establishment of a clean-up fund for abandoned hardrock mine sites, prioritizing the riskiest ones.

Stronger review requirements, specifically for mines proposed near national parks, to help protect nationally significant areas such as Grand Canyon National Park, where miners had filed more than 1,100 claims within five miles of the park as of October 2008.

A threshold environmental standard for mining. This standard would not preclude mining, but it would make it possible to protect public lands if a mining proposal would irrevocably destroy other equally valuable resources.

Every year, the mining industry's fear of losing the sweet deal they currently enjoy on U.S. public lands leads, predictably, to baseless arguments that reform will cause a large scale departure of mining from American soil.

But we know there are many reasons companies will still want to mine for hardrock minerals in the United States. In an annual survey of metal mining and exploration companies published by the independent, Canadian-based Fraser Institute in 2008, Nevada ranked second out of 68 jurisdictions worldwide for overall policy attractiveness. Utah and Wyoming also made the top 10, and Arizona the top 20. The survey highlighted why the U.S. has appeal. Relative to many other countries the U.S. offers good enforcement, good infrastructure, a stable political system, minimal risk of terrorism or guerrilla groups ruining a mining investment—and a predictable regulatory system. Imposition of a Federal royalty—or fee—on production—will not change those powerful advantages.

We also know that the mining industry is clinging to an outdated boondoggle. Nearly every country in the world imposes a royalty—except the United States.

Industry might also trot out the argument that this bill undermines our Nation's secure access to the minerals we use in everyday products. Yet, import reliance alone is not a problem, as the National Research Council of the National Academies asserted in a recent study of critical minerals. Some minerals we have always imported in significant quantities, simply because the ones we need do not exist in mineable quantities here.

Furthermore, a 2008 Congressional Research Service report concluded that Mining Law reform legislation would not likely have much impact on domestic mining capacity or the import reliance of minerals like copper, uranium, platinum, and molybdenum, in large part because the vast majority of mining on federal lands is for gold—about 88 percent.

Today, our goals for mining policy are no longer what they were in 1872, when Representative Sargent hoped the mining law would encourage miners to "dig deeper into the earth" and "further into the Hills." We can aspire to a law that does not merely promote mining, but one that also protects the other values of the hills themselves: clean water, wildlife, recreation, open space, and tourism. We should aim for a law that encourages mining but also encourages responsible corporate citizenship. And, a law that brings a fair return to the taxpayer. That would be a Mining Law worthy of the 21st—rather than the 19th—century.